

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JUNE 10, 1858.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. MALLORY submitted the following

REPORT.

*The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the petition of Charlotte Taylor, have had the same under consideration, and thereupon report:*

The memorialist, as the daughter of William Scarbrough, of Savannah, Georgia, asks for some "pecuniary acknowledgment" for the benefits which have resulted to the country at large from the enterprise and pecuniary sacrifices of her father in constructing the first steamer that ever crossed the Atlantic.

The enterprise of William Scarbrough, upon which the petitioner relies, is established by the testimony of Stevens Rogers; and from this it appears that Mr. Scarbrough purchased the vessel in question at New York in 1818, took her to Savannah, fitted her as a steamer, named her the "Savannah," and prepared to test with her the practicability of crossing the Atlantic by steam.

The witness says: "Her heavy castings were made in New York, and her boilers manufactured at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, by Daniel Dodge. The expense of fitting this vessel as a steam vessel and of sending her across the Atlantic was borne by the said William Scarbrough. After she was completely fitted as a steam vessel, she left New York under canvas, (the law then not permitting any vessel but New York vessels to be navigated by steam in their waters,) and sailed for Savannah, Georgia, and arrived there in the early part of May, 1819. President Monroe and his suite were at this time in Charleston, South Carolina. William Scarbrough directed us to proceed to Charleston, and give President Monroe, &c., an invitation to come to Savannah on board the steam vessel. We went, in accordance with his directions, to Charleston, and called upon President Monroe, and gave him the invitation above stated. President Monroe informed us that the people of Charleston did not wish him to leave their State in a Georgia conveyance, and that he would visit us at Savannah. We returned to Savannah. In a few days after, President Monroe arrived in Savannah and came on board the vessel with his suite and several naval officers and citizens. The vessel was navigated entirely by steam; we proceeded down the river upon an excursion, and the President, &c., dined on board. The President was greatly pleased

with the vessel, and stated to Mr. Scarbrough, that, upon the arrival of the Savannah from her cruise across the Atlantic, (which was then about to be made,) he desired the vessel to be brought to Washington, and he thought there would be no doubt the government would purchase her and employ her for a cruiser upon the coast of Cuba, &c. We sailed from Savannah for Liverpool on the 26th of May, 1819. My brother-in-law, Moses Rogers, was master, or held her papers, and was an accomplished engineer. I was sailing master; Mr. Blackman was the third officer on board. There was a considerable difficulty in procuring a crew, as they felt that it was an enterprise attended with great danger, and many refused to ship at any price. Having sailed on the 26th of May, we made the port of Liverpool in twenty-two days after leaving Savannah—fourteen out of the twenty-two days having been navigated by steam; and the only reason why the whole voyage was not performed by steam, was the fear that there might not be a sufficiency of fuel, and not from any inability of the vessel to perform the entire voyage by steam. When we arrived off Cape Clear, the admiral at Cork despatched a ship to our relief, supposing that we were *on fire*. This ship caused a great excitement upon her arrival at Liverpool, and a great many amusing incidents occurred, which would take too much time and space to relate. The English government watched apparently with great jealousy, and it was rumored that the ship was destined to remove Napoleon from St. Helena to the United States. From Liverpool, we proceeded to Copenhagen, where she excited great curiosity, and from thence to Stockholm, where a like interest and curiosity to see her were manifested. She was visited at Stockholm by the royal family, and at the invitation of Mr. Hughes, our minister, by Sir Thomas Graham, Lord Lyndock, who was then on a tour through the north of Europe, and we made an excursion among the islands. Lord Lyndock proceeded on board our vessel to St. Petersburg. While on the passage to St. Petersburg, Lord Lyndock desired us to bring the vessel from steam to canvas. He held his watch and noted the time employed to change the vessel from steam to canvas; this was accomplished, as he stated, in fifteen minutes; so delighted was he, that he exclaimed, 'I blame no man born in the United States for being proud of his country, and were I a young man I'd go there myself.'

"He was received at Cronstadt by the Emperor Alexander, who was much pleased with the vessel. I have in my possession a gold snuff box, a present from Lord Lyndock, upon which is the following inscription: 'Presented by Sir Thomas Graham, Lord Lyndock, to Stevens Rogers, sailing master of the steamship Savannah, at St. Petersburg, October 10, 1819.' She sailed from St. Petersburg to Arundel, in Norway, and from thence to Savannah, Georgia, making the passage from Arundel to Savannah in twenty-five days, steaming on her passage nineteen days. The expenses of this trip were borne by William Scarbrough, and, as I was informed and believe, consumed his entire estate, which was supposed to be large.

"The great fire at Savannah also occurred soon after our arrival, and while we were on our way from Savannah to Washington, in accordance with the suggestion of President Monroe. For some reason not

known to me, the government did not purchase the vessel, and Mr. Scarbrough being embarrassed in his circumstances, the vessel was at last sold at auction, and she was turned into a packet. The credit of this enterprise was due to Mr. William Scarbrough, as he purchased the vessel, fitted her, and paid her expenses. He is now dead. I have seen and know his daughter, now Mrs. Charlotte Taylor; she is now living. Mr. Moses Rogers, the first officer, is dead, and I know of no one now living except myself who was on board the vessel during the voyage. Mr. Scarbrough expressed great confidence in the enterprise, as one which would bring honor to his country, and in which he (and perhaps myself also) would be kindly remembered. In the services and sacrifices which he then made I have no doubt he was a loser to an amount of more than one hundred thousand dollars.

“STEVENS ROGERS.”

Sworn to and subscribed this second day of May, A. D. 1856.

The mechanical energy and boldness of Mr. Scarbrough, aided by his private fortune, were all embarked in an enterprise of great interest, of the successful issue of which serious doubts were generally entertained by practical as well as scientific men on both sides of the Atlantic. He was eminently successful, and from this enterprise dates the era of ocean steam navigation.

In thus practically demonstrating a problem of unusual interest, and one from whose successful solution mankind have been so greatly benefitted, Mr. Scarbrough doubtless exhausted his means and died in poverty; and the enduring honor of having thus served his race, and the gratitude of his countrymen, will place his name in fellowship with that of Fulton.

Your committee, after mature consideration and reflection, can find no authority for granting the prayer of the petitioner, and they report adversely thereto, and ask to be discharged from its further consideration.

